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Letter dated 11 August 1995 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions of my Government, I am writing to you regarding the letter of Mr. Sacirbey of 7 August 1995 addressed to you (A/50/337-S/1995/664, annex), concerning the current situation with the Serb refugees in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina caused by Croatia's aggression against Krajina.

In the above letter once again falsehoods have been advanced with the aim of discrediting the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in connection with the admittance of refugees into its territory and its alleged assistance to "Karadzic's authorities and military commanders".

It has been alleged that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, transgressing against humanitarian norms, had closed its border for all men of fighting age, Serb refugees, who recently fled the territory of Krajina. At the same time, it has been alleged that the goal of this policy is to expand the army of the Republic of Srpska.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia rejects most categorically such ill-intentioned allegations, which once again highlight the hypocritical and war-mongering policy of the Muslim authorities in Sarajevo towards the Serbs in the Republic of Srpska and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has not only been accepting generously all refugees from the territories engulfed by the war - be they Serbs, Croats,

* A/50/150.

Muslims or others - but under the heavy burden of unjustified sanctions and its own precarious position, has struggled to assist and provide care for them. Almost 600,000 refugees found shelter in the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, excluding the latest wave of refugees that has headed for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, estimated at 250,000 people by independent sources, following Croatia's aggression on Krajina.

The daily reports of the United Nations peace-keeping force deployed in the field irrefutably evidence that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia accords equal treatment to all refugees who decide to seek shelter in its territory. Those reports provide data on a daily basis on the number of refugees that enter the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Not a single word from the reports supports the claim contained in the letter of the Muslim Foreign Minister to the effect that the Yugoslav authorities classify refugees as to those of fighting age and those that are not and that the men of fighting age have been denied entry into the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, thus indirectly increasing the army of the Republic of Srpska.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has never discriminated against the refugees regardless of their nationality, ethnic origin or religion. It should be noted that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has provided shelter for 40,000 Muslim refugees, including 300 Muslim soldiers who fled Bosnia and Herzegovina and came to Yugoslavia, where they have been received with understanding for their hardships, the same as all other refugees who have been forced to seek shelter in the territory of multi-ethnic and multinational Yugoslavia. That fact has also been confirmed by the report of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC News, Issue No. 32 of 9 August 1995), which says that on 4 August 1995 the ICRC members visited 299 men and 1 woman who had fled Zepa and found refuge in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The request that on border crossings between the Muslim Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia the representatives of the Bosnian Muslim Government be present, is irrational in itself since the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia does not share a border with the territories under the control of the Muslim Government in Sarajevo. Therefore, it is illogical that the representatives of the Sarajevo Government oversee border crossings between the Republic of Srpska and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The request is also redundant since the border between the Republic of Srpska and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has already been constantly monitored by the humanitarian mission of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.

It is obvious that the letter of the Muslim Foreign Minister is aimed at creating a false picture on the role and alleged aspirations of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia at a time when the aggression and genocide against the Serb people in the Republic of Serb Krajina continues as well as in the whole territory under control of the Muslim Government in Sarajevo. Such allegations again give rise to confusion and interfere with the activities of the United Nations peace-keeping force. Moreover, they serve to impose false concepts that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is indirectly assisting the expansion of the army of the Republic of Srpska, which fits the pattern of well-known and oft-used practice of turning the media against the Serb people.

Finally, I wish to lay particular emphasis on the well-known fact that the forces loyal to A. Izetbegovic's Government in Sarajevo, deliberately and ever-so-fiercely continue flagrantly to threaten the peace process and undermine directly every peace initiative. At the same time, by their offensive actions, they stoke up the flames of war in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and hand in hand with the regime of F. Tudjman undermine all efforts of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the international community as a whole finally to reach a solution to the conflict in those territories. Regrettably, all this is totally ignored by many members of the world Organization, which is to the detriment of peace efforts towards the resolution of the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 28 of the provisional agenda and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dragomir DJOKIĆ
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.